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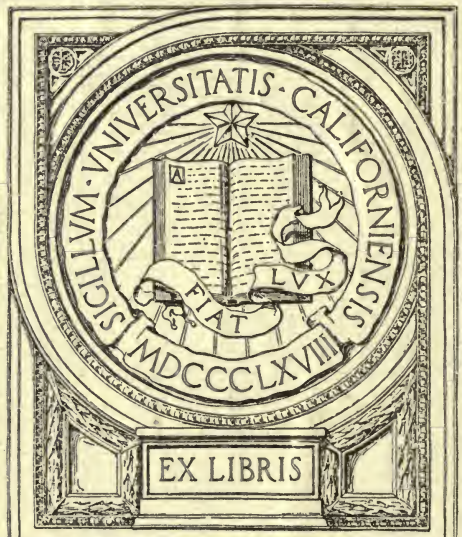

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BOARD OF EDUCATION.

MEMORANDA ON TEACHING AND ORGANISATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

HISTORY.

LONDON:
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TEACHING OF HISTORY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

1. This Circular is issued for the guidance of Head Masters and Head Mistresses in arranging the course of work in history. It must be clearly understood that it is not the wish of the Board to lay down strict rules either as to the arrangement of the course or as to the methods of teaching. This would be, above all, undesirable in a subject such as history, in which perhaps more than in any other there is room for the greatest variety of treatment. The experience of Inspectors, however, shows that in many schools there is clearly need for some help.

In this circular, wherever Masters and boys are spoken of, Mistresses and girls are understood to be included.

Arrangement of the Course.

2. The time given to history is generally two lessons a week. This is generally as much as can be spared from other subjects; but, as is pointed out below, it can be indirectly increased by establishing a connection between the teaching of history and that of English literature and composition, and (in the higher forms) that of modern languages. It may sometimes be desirable for one or more terms to use more of the available time for some other subject, such as geography, and at another part of the school course to give extra time to history in compensation. Arrangements of this kind are specially useful when the master who teaches the English subjects has a special knowledge of either history or geography.

3. The first stage, which begins at the earliest age and ends at about the age of 12, will consist almost entirely of stories. These should not be confined to stories taken from the history of England. The pupils should become familiar with the chief events and characters from the history of the most important nations, in their traditional form. Where the field is so great there is endless scope for selection, but it might include, besides the obvious stories from the history of the British Isles, stories such as those of the siege of Troy, the Persian Wars, Alexander the Great, stories from Roman History, the fall of Jerusalem, and the history of the early Church, the sack of Rome by Alaric and the invasion of Attila, Charlemagne, the Cid, St. Louis, St. Francis of Assisi, William the Silent, Columbus and other explorers, Galileo, Washington, Garibaldi.

During the earliest years it will not be possible to distinguish between legend and history; but, especially in the last part of

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this stage the pupils should be carefully trained to understand the chronological sequence of events. By the time they are 12 they should have some idea of the nature of the great nations and stages in civilisation, centring in each case round certain individuals or events in their chronological succession. They should not have to learn a large number of dates, and generally dates should not be learnt except of those events which have been specially studied; but a few of the most important dates must be known. No attempt should be made at a formal and systematic study of English history, and it is especially necessary to warn schools against starting too soon on matters of constitutional history. On the other hand, the pupils should get a clear grasp of the chronological sequence of the events which they learn, and these should be so selected as to cover the whole field of English history. It does not seem desirable to give up the traditional system by which boys are expected to know the kings of England, but of course the dates and names of the kings should be learnt in connection with some important events of the reigns, and not merely by rote.

It is impossible at this stage to separate the teaching of history by a hard line from the other allied subjects such as literature or geography. Much of the historical teaching will best be given in the form of stories selected from suitable authors, such as Herodotus, or Plutarch, or the Mediæval Chronicles, or by reading books such as Scott's "Tales of a Grandfather." The story should be fully illustrated by plans and pictures of armour, dress, castles, &c., and the pupils should themselves be occasionally required to make plans and models. The pupils should be required to reproduce in their own words, both orally and occasionally in writing, the stories which they have learnt.

The work of this stage is of great importance, for there is much in the simpler narrative portion of history which can be learnt then and can never be learnt with the same interest and facility later, and the stories from history afford excellent material for training the imagination. It is now too often found that boys in Secondary Schools, when they should be ready to begin the next stage, are entirely ignorant of the most elementary facts. The work of these years should give centres of interest, round which the more formal historical learning of later years will crystallise.

Much of the teaching will be given orally, but even at this stage it does not seem desirable to dispense entirely with the use of a book. The proper use of suitable books by the pupils themselves gives an intellectual training for the lack of which no oral teaching, however excellent, can compensate.

Even if there is no formal and connected history taught, there is scarcely any limit to the amount of teaching that an able master will be able to give in answering questions that will naturally be asked by any class of intelligent children, in

supplementing, preparing for, and explaining the written narrative.

4. The work of the years from about 12 to about 16 is the most difficult to arrange.

In nearly every school it will be necessary here to place a formal course covering the whole of English history from the invasion of the Romans to the present day.

For this not less than three years is necessary. The work cannot really be done in less than four years, but it will not always be possible to spare so much time. The best arrangement seems to be to divide the course into three parts, in chronological succession, assigning one part to each year, and, if possible, to give one year to general revision, laying special stress on those matters which, owing to their difficulty, were omitted before. For the arrangement of this, which is for most schools the chief part of the work, the following suggestions are made.

English History.

5. The course must cover the whole of English history. It is not, *e.g.*, sufficient that it should begin at the Norman conquest.

It does not follow from this that all parts and aspects of the history should be treated with equal detail. The amount of ground to be covered and the shortness of the time available would make this impossible. There are many periods and many subjects which present little that is of interest or instruction to younger pupils. Thus, in the earliest period it is not meant that, because a good knowledge should be acquired of the course and character of the successive invasions of the country and of the conversion to Christianity, any attempt should be made to trace in detail the struggles of the early kingdoms or to discuss the obscure and complicated questions of early English institutions. It will probably be desired to bring down the account of the Colonial expansion almost to the present day; but it will not therefore be necessary to attempt to include the whole of the internal political history of the nineteenth century.

The first condition of good work is indeed the recognition of the fact that an attempt to give an equal and uniform knowledge of the whole of English history must fail. What should be aimed at is—

(*a*) a clear apprehension of the general chronological sequence of the cardinal events;

(*b*) a fairly detailed study of those parts or aspects of the history which are at each stage of the school course not beyond the comprehension of the pupils.

The determination of what is to be omitted will vary in different schools. It must be a severe test of the insight and knowledge of the staff, and it should be made for each school in consultation with the chief teacher of history. Generally all difficult matters of constitutional history, which too often are presented to the pupils at an early stage, should, if dealt with at all, be reserved for the highest forms in the school, and it will be desirable to pass over with the very briefest notice those periods, the history of which is merely a record of bad government, as, *e.g.*, the reign of Edward II., or those which are occupied with complicated and often squalid political intrigues, which, interesting and instructive as they may be to mature historical students, offer little that is useful to younger pupils. Generally at each stage attention should be concentrated not only on what is important, but on that the importance and interest of which can be made intelligible to the pupils. For this reason it will often be desirable to pass over almost without mention much of the internal history of the eighteenth century (*e.g.*, the struggles between the different sections of the Whig party, or the whole of the Wilkes episode), much of the political history of Charles II.'s reign, the internal history of the Lancastrian period, the civil war of Stephen's reign; in order to secure more time for a fuller treatment of events such as the Crusades, the Civil War, the reign of Elizabeth, the great wars for Colonial supremacy, the war of American Independence. Much will depend on the previous education which the pupils have had. If they have been accustomed to read about historical events and characters, and have already got a good knowledge of the chief stories of English history, they will be able to do much more advanced work than those who have to begin at the beginning and make up for the time lost in earlier years.

The work for each year will then consist in the study of a large section of English history, as, *e.g.*, the Middle ages, or the Tudors and Stuarts. The main outline of this will be learnt. But, within this, attention will be concentrated on selected portions of the history, and large sections will be freely passed over with the very briefest reference.

There should be no attempt to learn all the names and facts which are mentioned in the ordinary school text-books. On the other hand the treatment of some parts should be much fuller than is now usual, so as to leave in the minds of the pupils a vivid and lasting impression. This cannot be attained without an amount of detail which cannot be given if the pupils are expected to remember all parts of the history. The course will also necessarily include reference to the great inventions, such as gunpowder, printing, the steam-engine, which are specially characteristic of European civilisation, and some explanation of their effect upon the history of the nation.

Foreign History.

6. The course must include in all cases such reference to and explanation of the chief events of European history as is necessary for the understanding of English history.

For this purpose it may from time to time be necessary to leave the direct narrative of English history, and give one or more lessons entirely to the explanation of those external events which are connected with it.

The application of this principle may be illustrated by the following points, which are not in any way exhaustive. The account of the Danish invasions should be incorporated in a general description of the expeditions of the Norsemen. The Crusades should not be treated as an isolated episode in connection with the Third Crusade, but there should be a connected account of the First Crusade, with the establishment and fall of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem. It will be easy in connection with this to give an explanation of the European position of the Norman and Angevin kings. The French wars of the earlier and later Plantagenet kings will probably be best treated from the point of view of the growth and consolidation of the French Monarchy. This would be much facilitated if in the first stage the pupils had learnt something about St. Louis and Joan of Arc. There will necessarily be a full account of the great discoveries of the 15th and 16th centuries as a starting point for the history of European colonisation, and also of the rise of the Spanish Empire and of those episodes in the religious struggles on the Continent, such as the rise of the United Netherlands, which immediately affect English history. The foreign wars of the 18th century will necessitate a careful study of the historical map of Europe.

It will probably not generally be desirable at this stage to attempt more independent study of modern European history, but these digressions may be extended according to the capacity of the class, and with a clever class it may sometimes be found worth while to give a whole term's work to some specially important part of European history. This will, however, generally be best reserved for the more advanced work in the highest classes.

It this way it may be possible to remove the complete ignorance of any history outside England, which is now too common, without adding a separate subject to the curriculum and to take the foreign history in such a way as to make the English history more intelligible and interesting.

Local History.

7. It is essential that in each school attention should be paid to the history of the town and district in which it is situated.

This will generally be best done not by giving a separate course of work on local history, but by constant reference to the history of the locality as illustrative of the general history.

This will take two forms.

(1) All great and important events which have taken place in the neighbourhood will naturally be chosen for more detailed treatment. This applies especially to such matters as battles in any of the Civil wars or rebellions. In dealing with the Wars of the Roses or the Great Civil War it is generally desirable that some operations should be chosen for detailed treatment. Within broad limits it is immaterial which operations are selected, but a detailed knowledge of, *e.g.*, some one battle of the Civil War will explain better than anything else the general nature of the struggle. Whether it be the battle of Marston Moor or Newbury, the siege of Gloucester or Colchester, the battle of Wakefield or Tewkesbury, may in many cases depend on the position of the school. In all cases, even if no event of the first importance has taken place there, the part taken in any of the Civil wars by that district of England should be fully explained.

In the same way a school in London or the Eastern Counties will naturally make a more special study of the Peasants' revolt; one in Lincolnshire or Yorkshire, of the Pilgrimage of Grace; one in the West, of Monmouth's rebellion. The relations to Scotland will naturally be more fully dealt with in a school situated in the Northern counties, those with Wales by one on the Welsh border. The civil war of Stephen's reign would probably be left out altogether unless, as, *e.g.*, at Lincoln and Winchester, there are special circumstances of local interest connected with it.

(2) General changes, whether political, social, or economic, such as the Roman occupation, the foundation and dissolution of the monasteries, the Norman settlement, the economic changes of the 15th or 18th centuries, the Reform Bill, should always when possible be explained and illustrated by reference to their effect on the particular district. In this way alone will it be possible to give a concrete illustration of the broad generalisation which is all that is to be found in the usual school text-book. The origin and changes of the units of Local Government, the effect of the industrial revolution on population, the changes in Land tenure brought about by the Norman conquest, can in this way often be explained by facts which are within the personal knowledge of the pupils.

8. There must in all cases be included a study of those actually existent historical remains, such as castles, city walls, monasteries, which are accessible from the school, and in connection with this the study of the earlier periods must include some knowledge of the elements of architecture. It is far more important that pupils should leave school with their

eyes trained to observe the historical remains which are to be found in almost every part of England, than that they should attempt to remember the whole of the political history, much of which they cannot understand. In this co-operation with the Art teaching may often be useful.

For this purpose it is essential that the school library and museum should be well provided with books, plans, maps, and pictures. In particular an attempt should be made to get together a collection of maps, either originals or reproductions, illustrating the growth of towns and other changes in the district as well as pictures of important buildings. In addition to this there should be made specially prepared extracts and translations from historical documents giving full details of local events. Every school might, *e.g.*, possess the extract from Doomsday dealing with that place, and extracts from chronicles describing any great event that has taken place there (as for instance the contemporary accounts of the attack on London in the Peasants' revolt); if suitable, the precise narrative of the process by which any Religious house in the neighbourhood was dissolved and how the property was dealt with. Information as to the origin and growth of the chief industries of the place should be made accessible to the pupils. Especially in the great manufacturing towns, the industrial revolution should be treated in immediate reference to the district, and the changes in the character of the district consequent on it be shown in detail.

The preparation of material of this kind must necessarily be a work of some time and labour. It will often be possible to secure the assistance of residents not themselves occupied in teaching, and it is a work in which the co-operation of the Local Historical Associations that are now being founded will be of the greatest service. On this and many other matters valuable assistance will be found in the pamphlets issued by the Historical Association.

Scope of the Course.

9. This programme of work, ambitious though it may appear to be, will not be impossible of execution if it is remembered that much of the information and many of the conceptions dealt with in history are dealt with in the allied subjects, especially in literature and geography. The information acquired in the one subject will be used in the other.

In particular, much may be done by a judicious selection of the works of literature chosen to be read, whether in school or by the pupils in their own homes. It is not meant that the study of English literature should be subordinated to that of history (there is too much tendency to do this in the curriculum of some schools), but the course for each year should include those works which, while by their literary excellence and general character suitable for school work,

immediately bear on the history of the period. For instance when the Middle Ages are being studied extracts from the "Chronicles" of Froissart, the introduction to the "Canterbury Tales" and some contemporary ballads might be read; and in connection with later periods, selections from the Voyages of Hakluyt, Prescott's "Conquest of Mexico and Peru," Macaulay's Essays, &c. Historical novels may be used with discretion, but, as a rule, they are more suitable for the private reading of the pupils than for systematic study in school. It is immaterial whether this work is put down in the time table as history or literature; the important thing is that it should be done, and that the knowledge and information so acquired should be used in the history lessons and in the essays or questions set to be done by the pupils.

In the same way, if geography is intelligently taught, much knowledge which is essential for a proper study of history will be acquired in the geography lessons. Thus the study of the geography of Asia should include some elementary facts as to the rise and spread of Mohammedanism.

It is necessary, if these various subjects are not taught by the same teacher, that each teacher should be informed of the work being done in other lessons, so as to be able to use the knowledge so acquired.

10. In many schools it will not be possible to attempt an independent work in history other than that of England.

The character of any work done in the history of other countries should probably be determined by the languages other than English that are studied in the school. As a general rule pupils should be enabled to gain some knowledge of the chief events and historical personages in the history of any country the language of which they study.

In applying this principle the following suggestions may be useful:—

(1) In all classical schools there will, of course, be separate and organised instruction in the history of Greece and Rome, in connection with the authors read.

(2) In these schools, and also in others where Latin is learnt, it is desirable that there should also be a course on the general outlines of the history of the ancient world leading up to some knowledge of the nature and extent of the Roman Empire regarded as the origin of the Christian civilisation of Modern Europe. This course can easily be connected with the study of the historical books of the Old and New Testament. In many schools a year is now given to a course of this kind. The essential difficulties have not, perhaps, been yet entirely overcome, and more experience is needed as to the age when this course is best taken.

(3) In those schools which are able to give an advanced literary training based on modern languages and literature, it is very desirable that there should be some systematic work done on some portions or periods of foreign modern or mediæval history. This might with advantage take the form of the study of some classical historical work in French and German, which should in this case be read primarily for the information which it contains. Work of this kind naturally belongs to the last stage of school life, and should not be attempted unless real facility in the use of the language has been gained.

11. The work done in the last years of school will necessarily vary much. In classical schools it will be special study of ancient history, in others it may be the special study of some period of Continental or of English history. For those who are chiefly occupied with the natural sciences or mathematics it will often be best to finish the work with a course on the history of Europe in the 19th century, and on the working of the English Constitution considered with reference to its origin and history.

In these cases it is always desirable to take as the centre of the instruction some one or more books of high historical and literary merit. Whatever the conclusion of the course may be, it should not be merely the study of a school text-book. No pupil should leave school without having read some part of the writings of one or more of the great historians.

Text-Books.

12. In some schools an attempt is made to dispense with the use of a text-book, and the instruction is entirely oral. This system has often been adopted as a reaction from the use of unsuitable text-books. It is not recommended, except for the very youngest forms, where the children are not yet able to read with ease, and even for them it would often be better to give the instruction by reading aloud. There are not many teachers who have so great a power of exposition and narrative that it is justifiable for them to dispense entirely with the use of a book.

Moreover, one of the chief values of the study of history is that it affords valuable practice in the use of books. The increase in the vocabulary, the study of the precise meaning, and, as the pupils become older and use larger books, the analysis and criticism of a well-written book, are essential parts of their historical education.

It is, for this reason, important that the greatest care should be exercised in the choice of the book to be used. Generally, it may be said that no book is read so often and remembered with such verbal accuracy as the history text-book. It should

therefore be a book which, both in language and style, is of a high standard and slightly more difficult than a book which the pupils could read with ease alone. The use of a book which is the abbreviated edition of a larger work is not generally to be recommended. Much better work will be done with one which has the freshness and interest of an independent work.

It is also important to remember that it is impossible for any single book to contain all the information that the pupils will require. Many of the most common faults would be avoided if it were always kept in mind that the object of study is not a single book, but the events of which the book is a partial and incomplete record, and that, however excellent the book is, it will need supplementing and explaining.

A clear distinction should also be made between the book or books containing a well-arranged narrative and a book which is merely a chronological summary or compendium of facts to be used for reference. At least in the higher forms, both are required; the fault of many of the text-books in use is that they attempt at the same time to fulfil the two different functions, and the fault of the teaching is that the difference is not recognised. The constant use of a chronological summary and of books of reference is essential; perhaps the best form of teaching is to train the pupils to make their own chronological summary for themselves.

The use of the book will therefore constantly vary. At the beginning of a new and difficult subject there will have to be full explanation by the teacher before the text-book is studied; when the narrative of the book is full and well written, it may be best for the pupils to read it first and for any necessary comment and explanation to come afterwards; sometimes the chief work will have to be condensation and analysis of the book, sometimes a long digression on some matter not sufficiently dealt with in it.

Written Work.

13. All instruction, even in the lowest forms, should include some written work. This work must not be used merely as a test of the memory. It will take two forms:—

(*a*) History should be used as affording practice in original composition. Questions and essays set to be done need not always be done under examination conditions, but should in some cases be arranged so as to train and test the power of using books. If written work is done at home it should be of such a kind that books can be used.

(*b*) There should be systematic practice in the taking of notes, graduated according to the age of the pupils. The object of this should be to train the pupils so that by the time they leave school they are able to

make a well-arranged digest for themselves of all the information which they acquire both from reading and from teaching, and the note-book should eventually become a self-made book of reference to which additions and corrections are constantly being made. The note-book of former work should then be at hand when later work necessitates a reference to work which has already been done.

In testing the knowledge of the pupils, the questions addressed to them, whether for verbal or written answers, should not be confined to those which can be answered in a single word or phrase. They should be of such a kind as to train the power of giving a connected narrative or explanation. The want of this, especially in oral work, is one of the chief faults of English schools.

Maps and Atlases.

14. Constant use must be made of the map, and the school must be provided with good historical maps or atlases. The pupils should also make historical maps for themselves, which should be preserved in their note-books or in special map books. This is especially important in all European and Colonial history, and the pupils should gain a clear representation of the great political divisions of Europe at different epochs.

W. N. BRUCE,
Principal Assistant Secretary.

25*th November*, 1908.

Memorandum in explanation and expansion of the foregoing Circular.

15. Circular 599 recommends to schools a course of study including a consecutive study of English history from the earliest times, extending over three years at least, and four wherever possible.

It also recommends that a large liberty should be assumed in each school to leave out freely much which is now included in the ordinary school treatment.

The following considerations will explain the reasons for recommending this course.

One of the chief reasons why much history teaching is so unsuccessful is that an attempt is made to teach too much. The number of facts, persons, events, mentioned in any ordinary

text-book used in the middle forms is far greater than boys can understand, much less remember. If an attempt is made to remember them it results in a purely verbal memory of the words, names and language of the text-book. This is worse than valueless, and makes boys hate the whole subject. In addition to this the amount of work to be got through prevents them dwelling with any detail on those events or ideas which would be and are interesting and instructive to boys. A considerable amount of detail is necessary to get the full interest and instruction even for quite young boys, but this of course requires time, and time is now wanting.

An illustration will make this clear. If a class is doing the Norman Conquest, a master would naturally wish with boys of 13 or even younger to take the whole events of the year 1066, and follow in detail the movements of both sides. It is quite possible to do so at this age, and tell the whole story in such a way that it will never afterwards be forgotten. As a matter of fact this is not done; in many books used in school the very name of the battle of Stamford Bridge does not occur, and the whole romance of the struggle is lost.* It is more than thirty years since Freeman wrote, but the whole dramatic crisis is still quite obscured in many books and schools. Any comment on this is met by the answer that there is not time for fuller treatment. It will, however, generally be found that the boys then go on to learn about Lanfranc, Anselm, and the conflict over the investitures, or such matters as the misgovernment of Edward II., or the constitutional experiments of the Lancastrian kings. These same boys will at the same time know nothing of the great architectural achievements of Henry III.'s reign, they will not know the names of the Monasteries or the builders of the Castle which existed in their own towns, and will leave the Middle Ages without having read a word of Froissart or any other of the chroniclers. They will have omitted much which they might learn with interest and profit, and they will have pretended to learn much which is quite beyond their comprehension.

A very clear illustration of the faults of the present treatment in regard to foreign history is presented by the Crusades. As a rule no account is given of the earlier crusades, and when the boys get to the crusade of Richard I., they are never told anything about the situation. Incredible as it may seem, it is only very exceptionally that they know the essential fact that Saladin had just recaptured Jerusalem from the Christians, and

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* *See* "Alice in Wonderland," Chap. 3.

"This is the driest thing I know. Silence all round, please!" "William the Conqueror, whose cause was favoured by the Pope, was soon submitted to by the English, who wanted leaders, and had been of late much accustomed to usurpation and conquest. Edwin and Morcar, the earls of Mercia and Northumberland—."

that the crusade was undertaken to recover what had once been won and was now again lost to Christendom. As a rule when asked, they seem to think that the first crusade had failed and never reached Jerusalem. Of course this means that the whole history of Richard I. is devoid of meaning. The boys are, however, none the less taught to give an opinion that Richard should have stayed at home to look after his own dominions, though they do not know why the crusade was so urgently necessary at this time. Still less do they know that one of Richard's own family had been chosen King of Jerusalem. These are, however, not difficult or abstruse facts, they are the essential framework of the story. And surely this is the story that should be taught to boys of 13, not the arrangements made for the governing of England in Richard's absence—quite an important matter for advanced historical students, but one which it is not desirable to trouble these boys with. It may not be English history, but does that matter? We want time to teach this, and this can only be found by leaving out something of that which is now taught

Now of course this is more and more recognised, and some of the newer text-books are much superior to the older, but a radical change cannot come till schools are authoritatively told that they cannot be expected to teach everything.

16. There are two schemes of work for meeting the difficulty, each of which has its advocates.

(*a*) The older is that of the "special period," which was formerly much encouraged by the Local and other examinations. This, however, seems to have the effect of increasing the very fault which it is desirable to correct. If a boy has to learn a special period especially for an examination, his object always is to know the whole period and all that happened in it; he wants to remember facts about all the names that occur in his text-book. He has no more a power of selection than if he is doing the whole of history, even less. If he is doing the 15th century he will aim at remembering all the battles in the Wars of the Roses. If he is doing the Stuarts he will want to know all the Parliaments of James I., and all the squalid intrigues of Charles II., *e.g.*, the names of the statesmen who formed the Cabal (as though boys could be expected to learn about men such as Arlington and Lauderdale), and as a result he will have little leisure for really getting to know—to know so that he realises it—the adventures of the Pilgrim Fathers on their settlement in America, the critical struggle between Charles I. and the Parliament before and after the outbreak of war, the contest with the Dutch for supremacy in the Channel.

Another result of the "special period" is that it prevents the pupils from getting a view of English history as a whole. This may not theoretically be a necessary result, but it is practically a universal one. They concentrate so fully on this one section

of the history that they never have time to turn their eyes outside it. They do not learn it in connection with what has gone before and what will follow, but look on it abstracted from its surroundings. This is no doubt to a great extent the result of the examination paper set, for the questions are generally scrupulously limited to that which actually happened within the specified years, but the type of paper has naturally arisen from the scheme of work.

It is, however, most desirable that the history of England, as a whole, should always be in the minds of the teacher, and the boys should be made to feel that they are learning not a "period" but a part of the whole story. If during one year they have been preparing one "period" for examination, the whole of it passes out of their mind when they take up another period next year. It will always happen that in the selection of work to be done each year some parts which belong to one period would better be postponed to the next. If the break from one year to another were made at the year 1688, much of the Colonial history of the Stuart reigns would naturally be deferred to the next year. On the other hand, it might often be found desirable to mention during the previous year such points as the legislation regarding the Dissenters, so as to show how the policy of Charles II.'s reign permanently affected English life.

What is often now done for examinations is to set a long period, *e.g.*, from 1066 to 1485, for "outlines" and a short period for special study. It is, however, better that the pupils should study specially not all that happened in one short part, but all the important events that happened during the whole of the longer period. It is not good for a boy to have to rush over something which is interesting and important because it comes in his "outlines," and then learn in more detail something which is of very inferior value because it comes in his "special period."

As to special periods, probably the best plan is that they should come very late in the school course; they are really more suited for University work; when taken they should be very short and the period should then be studied with the greatest minuteness. The best kind of special period is, *e.g.*, the first five years of the French Revolution, the War of American Independence, the history of England from the year 1638 to the battle of Naseby, the history of Elizabeth's reign to the defeat of the Armada. A special period should never be studied unless the pupils are sufficiently advanced to read some standard work written for adults, and it is very doubtful whether it should be taken up unless they are able to read something of the nature of an original authority. The real object of the study of a special period is to get behind the scenes, and this is, of course, impossible in school work except, perhaps, occasionally with a very advanced class. It is most undesirable to read a special period from a school text-book.

It is worth while when one can study it in Froude, or Gardiner, or Clarendon. To learn, as far as it can be learnt, what really happened, to get behind the conventions, to penetrate into the inner secrets of politics even for a single year, this is an invaluable education, but it is not work for any but the most advanced scholars.

For this reason a Special Period may be quite legitimate in ancient history, when boys are reading an author such as Thucydides, or Cicero, or Tacitus; but because they read and carefully study writers of this calibre ancient history is, as a school subject, on quite a different plane from modern history.

(*b*) The other alternative, which is at present becoming more common, is what is called the "concentric system." In this the boys do the whole of English history each year. The idea is that they thereby get to look at the history as a whole, and each year add to their detailed knowledge. As they get older, they take up the more difficult points. It has certainly an advantage in this, that they can, *e.g.*, leave out the constitutional history at first and take it on the second or third survey. There are, however, fatal objections in practice.

The amount of ground to be covered each year is so great that the boys are always in a hurry, they never can get a strong impression of any event, individual or period. It ignores a fundamental point, that the first time when a boy learns anything is the time when the most vivid and abiding impression should be made on his mind. It also has this great danger, that it tempts the master to put broad historical generalisations before the boys when they are still without the rudimentary knowledge of the facts on which the generalisations are based. To stupid boys these generalisations have no meaning at all, to clever boys they are most dangerous, they are an encouragement to crude and ignorant superficiality, and often are seriously misleading. The time for generalisations is at the end of the course when the time comes for a final revision of the whole.

(*c*) Another scheme of work has found many distinguished advocates, namely, that in which any systematic study of English history begins with the present time and the course goes backwards. This is justified on the ground that all instruction should proceed from the known to the unknown. It seems, however, very doubtful whether it is possible to speak of the political history and system of the present day as being in any real sense known to boys and girls of 12 to 14. The extreme complexity of modern life, moreover, makes it very difficult to deal with, even for older pupils. It is also probable that the majority of boys are more easily interested in narratives of what is strange and new to them than in explanations of what is constantly before them. The very distance at which we stand from the earlier portions of history makes it possible to place the leading figures and episodes in a clearer perspective than is

possible for those of more modern times. Finally, this system misses that which should be the chief aim of every historical teacher, the presentation of a narrative which explains itself. Narrative should precede analysis, but a course of study which begins at the end must always be analytical.

It may also be added that the moral and political instruction which are an essential part of the study of history become almost impossible when dealing with the most recent period, while the study of the earlier periods is most helpful in stimulating the imagination of the pupils, and making them realise conditions of life and motives of action of which their personal experience can give them no knowledge. Of course this does not mean that in dealing with special subjects, such as the history of Ireland or North America, it may not be better to start from the critical period and make the earlier history subordinate to that. The whole history of British India is, *e.g.*, probably best approached from Clive and the Mutiny.

17. It is therefore suggested that Schools should within the four years from 12 to 16 plan a course of three or four years in which there should be a consecutive study of English history in the extended sense which is here advocated, *i.e.*, English history with large digressions on foreign history. The whole of English history would then be divided into three periods, one of them being assigned to each year. It will, however, be recognised from the beginning that the period assigned for each year is much more than can be properly done in the time, and that a great deal of it will have to be left out. The parts to be omitted will be determined before the beginning of the year, so that they will be left out deliberately, and the boys will be told that they are left out. This is of the greatest importance. Boys should be told what is being left out, and why.

The matter is best explained by illustration.

In taking the Middle Ages with boys of about 13, a beginning might be made with the Crusades down to the reconquest of Jerusalem by Saladin. This would give something of the general spirit of the Middle Ages. Then we should very rapidly pass over the history of the Norman kings to the establishment of the House of Anjou, explain their European position, take the Third Crusade, and the loss of the French possessions by John. At this point the internal history of England would be taken up, a very brief reference to the condition under the Norman kings being followed by an account of those measures of Henry II. by which the national legal system was established, and then pass on at once to Magna Charta and the beginning of Parliament, leaving out, *e.g.*, the whole topic of ecclesiastical legislation, but including a description of the great period of the Monastic revival and of ecclesiastical architecture—if possible, in connection with some special building known to the boys. After the nature

of the parliaments of Edward I. had been explained and compared with that of the present day, the master could simply state that during the next two centuries there were further developments of the power of Parliament, but that he cannot deal with them, and practically leave out all the constitutional history of the later Plantagenets, including even the deposition of Edward II. and Richard II., and take up the relations to Ireland, Scotland, Wales, the French wars, and perhaps some explanation of the economic changes of the 14th and 15th centuries.

In a course on the Tudor and Stuart period for boys of 14, we might begin with the great discoveries, leave out the greater part of the reign of Henry VII. and the first part of Henry VIII., go straight to the explanation of the Empire of Charles V., laying stress on the permanent importance of it, and showing how its effects still continue, and then take up the history of England at the beginning of the Reformation. The foreign policy of Elizabeth would probably be fully dealt with ; and the whole relations to Scotland during the reigns of the Tudors, with a fuller treatment of Mary, Queen of Scots. The Irish question would either be left out altogether, or if there were time, dealt with sufficiently fully to show its effect on the future history of Ireland ; but if it was taken, there could not be a break at the death of Elizabeth, it would have to be carried on at once to the time of Strafford, including the settlements of James I.

Too great stress should not be laid on these particular illustrations, each man would work out his own scheme, but something of this kind might be done.

This method would not, however, be really satisfactory unless the boys had had proper teaching in their earlier years. It implies that they have already some knowledge and in particular that they know the traditional stories, as well as the succession of the kings.

Supposing the whole question of the struggle of the kings with the Church were omitted, not because it is not important but because we should want the time for other matters, we should therefore practically have to leave out all about Becket. We should expect the boys to have learnt the story of the murder of Becket before, and just put in so much reference to it as to make them recall it ; but we should treat it rather as an illustration of the character of Henry II. and the power of the Church, describing the shrine and the pilgrimages, with anticipatory reference to Chaucer and the Reformation, and make no attempt to enter into the questions at issue in his quarrel with the king. One would not expect them to know the constitutions of Clarendon.

Of course in some schools, with boys of good ability, one might attempt to interest them in the whole question of the relations to the Papacy, but if this was done, something else, *e.g.*, the Wars of the Roses, would have to be left out altogether.

It might be quite legitimate to do this on the assumption that they knew already that there were Wars of the Roses, and sufficient of the popular stories about them. Of course if they have never heard of the battle of Bosworth, and do not know to which house each king belonged, the system breaks down, just as any system breaks down if, as is so often the case, the education of boys in their earlier years is unsatisfactory.

18. The most serious objection to the scheme is that many boys will do the early part of the history when they are about 13 and will not do it again; they will therefore have only a very imperfect understanding of it, and, in particular, will pass over most of the constitutional and ecclesiastical history. This may to some extent be met by the use of a final year for revision, and also more special work may be done later; but, after all, we cannot teach boys everything, and if they leave school at 16 we must acquiesce in the fact that they will not know the constitutional history of the Middle Ages. On the other hand, we may leave on their minds a permanent impression that they were a time full of life, energy and adventure, a desire to read again more fully later, a lively interest in the existing remains of mediæval buildings and a realisation that the work of the Middle Ages still survives in the England which they know. We must be content that they should not know much about the more difficult aspects of political and constitutional history.

There is another matter about revision. If the teaching is properly done there will be constant indirect revision of all work that has been done before. Whenever a new subject begins, such as the Revival of learning, the dissolution of the monasteries, the abdication of James II., there should be constant reference back to all that has been learnt bearing on this, *e.g.*, the Revival of learning will necessitate questions as to what the learning of the Middle Ages really was. This is now hardly ever done; there are, *e.g.*, few schoolboys who have the slightest idea that a large part of mediæval literature consisted of bad Latin verses. The dissolution of the monasteries should be introduced by recapitulation of the main facts about them: the Reformation by a reference to the ecclesiastical policy of William the Conqueror. The whole history of the 17th century will necessitate reference to precedents from mediæval history, the revolt of the Netherlands will involve a reference back to the Burgundy of the 15th century, the Treaty of Utrecht to the origin of the Spanish Empire. To a certain extent, therefore, the study of the later history will recall the earlier work and even add to the knowledge that has already been given. The earlier parts of the history should be looked on like the first chapters of a novel. They must be read first, but the full significance of what occurs in them will not be apparent till the later chapters have been read, and the reader will often have to turn back and refresh his memory as to what happened in them.

In regard to constitutional history it is a useful rule always to draw attention to and explain the origin of all institutions which still exist. From the beginning boys should be trained to search in the past for the origin and explanations of the institutions and political life of the present. This will be useful, *e.g.*, in the Reforms of Henry II. The legal reforms are the foundation of the present system; even for quite young boys some explanation of them is therefore desirable. On the other hand, matters such as the position of the Justiciar, though intrinsically less difficult, should be left out. All matter bearing on the origin of our present military system would be carefully explained.

19. The practical difficulty that we have to meet is examinations. History is always a most difficult and unsatisfactory subject to examine in well. The best work cannot always be made to tell.

It would, *e.g.*, be impossible in a general examination to set questions of such a kind that good work on local history would have its reward, but something could be done to deal even with this.

There would, however, be a great improvement if in all examination papers on the whole or any part of English history questions were included which would encourage intelligent study of the foreign history within the limits here explained. The neglect to do this has done much harm. It has been considered unfair to set questions that directly tested the knowledge of foreign history. This has done more than anything else to prevent good teaching.

Papers set on the whole of English history should be so arranged as to give a fair choice of questions to be answered, and the questions should be so chosen as to encourage those who have a fuller knowledge of the most important events rather than a general verbal knowledge of a large number of names and facts.

In some of the examinations now taken by boys of the age of 16 or 17, the History paper consists of questions on the latter half of English history. The objection to this is that the school leaving examinations should be a review of the whole of the work done at school, and not be confined to the work of the last year or two years. This will be best secured if the last year before this examination is used for a revision of the whole of English history. This can be done by the reading of some general book of English history more advanced in style and method than those in which it was studied during the earlier years. There are many books of this kind, of which Green's "Short History of the English People" is the best known.

After this will be the time for more special work of an advanced nature suitable for pupils of 17 and over.

20. In many girls' schools it will be found that a year in the middle of the course is now given to some general work on the

history of mediæval and modern Europe. It is not necessary that this course should be discontinued if it is preferred to that here recommended, though the great difficulties of covering the ground in any satisfactory manner are not generally realised. It is not desirable to continue a course which, as is sometimes attempted, includes in one year's work the history of both ancient and mediæval times.

21. Where a course of ancient history is taken, probably the best time would be at the conclusion of a three years' course of English history. This will be at about the time when the elementary study of Latin grammar is passing on to the reading of Latin authors. Those who were going in for a school leaving examination would then be able to give the fifth year to the revision of English history. In girls' schools it is not uncommon to place the study of stories from Greek and Roman history at about the age of 12, and if a suitable and simple book is used, this is often not unsuccessful. It often fails from the attempt to introduce matter, such as details of Athenian constitutional history, which is quite unsuitable.

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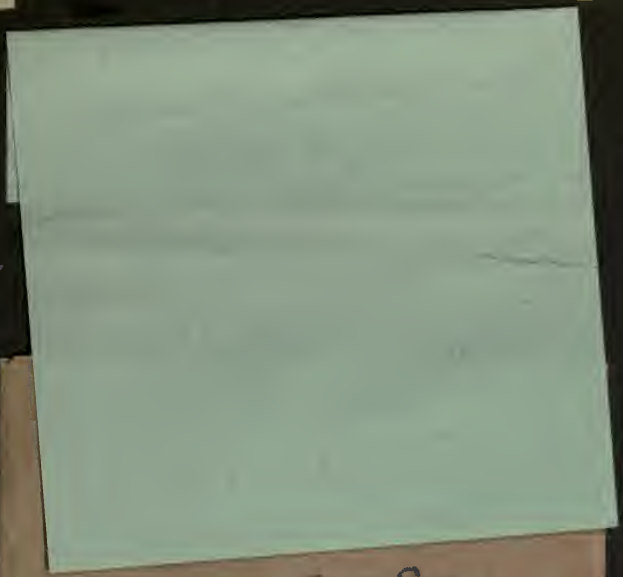

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